municating with the St. Petersburg Soviet or of getting ready to defend themselves.

Then the government launched a counteroffensive. Early in the morning, bands of local underworld characters led by plain-clothes policemen broke into liquor stores in different parts of Kronstadt. Barrels of vodka were rolled out into the streets. Attracted by the free treat, sailors joined the crowds in a drunken debauch. The city was in a state of anarchy when Trepov's crack troops landed on Kotlin. The sailors put up no resistance, and by night the city and the fortress were again under the government's control. Several hundred alleged ringleaders were brought before courts-martial. Rumors reached St. Petersburg that the death penalty awaited them all.

The liberal press viewed these events with fastidious disgust, but the workers' reaction was different. They sympathized with the sailors of Kronstadt.

"A foolish thing, this petition to the Tsar! But were we much wiser on January 9?"

"A disgrace to drink free vodka in the streets! But those who offered it are worse than those who drank."

Ready to forget the brawl-and-pogrom aspect of the affair and to consider it as a political revolt, St. Petersburg workers were shocked by the rumors that the sailors might face the firing squad. Before the revolutionary parties could grasp the meaning of the events, the workers made up their minds: by defending the sailors of Kronstadt, they would show all men in the armed forces that the workers were their brothers.

On October 30 and 31, scores of factory meetings adopted resolutions demanding release of their Kronstadt comrades and threatening to strike in support of this demand. A call would come to our group of meeting speakers: "Such and such mills are holding meetings. Send speakers." We would distribute our forces so as to permit the more efficient speakers to cover three or four factories not far apart. There was no time to discuss what we would say or to prepare resolutions.

The factory meetings those days were particularly solemn. Standards and emblems of the defense commandos were added to the customary factory banners. The factory chairman would show the speaker the draft of the resolution and say, "This is how the people here feel." And we would explain the resolution to the crowd and put it to a vote.

On November 1, the Soviet met to discuss the situation. The report on the events in Kronstadt was presented by an undersized youth in a sailor's uniform, with a pale face, blinking eyes, and a flat voice. He did not try to embellish the picture or defend his com-